



**Permanent Mission of the Republic of Cyprus
Geneva**

Ref.: 24.11.006.008 (615/86/1)

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Cyprus to the Office of the United Nations at Geneva and other International Organizations in Switzerland presents its compliments to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and with reference to the latter's note verbal YB/GN/TT dated 3 December 2012 has the honour to enclose herewith answers to the questionnaire submitted to the Government of Cyprus regarding Human Rights Council Resolution A/HRC/21/30 adopted at its twenty- first session entitled "Elaboration of international complementary standards to the International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination".

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Cyprus to the Office of the United Nations at Geneva and others International Organization in Switzerland avails itself of the opportunity to renew to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights assurances of its highest consideration.

Geneva, 14 January 2012

TO:
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
Palais des Nations
1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland

**Permanent Mission
Of the Republic of Cyprus**

**Rue du Grand Pré, 66
1202 Geneva Switzerland**

**Tel. : + 41 22 798 21 50
: + 41 22 788 59 80
Fax : + 41 22 791 00 84**

Questionnaire (paragraph 4 of A/HRC/21/30)

- i. The Cyprus Anti-Discrimination Body has reported, during the last two years, both racist incidents including racist violence, and racist hate speech. The body noted that there were a series of racist attacks. Following these incidents, the Police was requested to prepare a strategy for preventing and combating further expansion of this kind of violence.

The economic crisis that Cyprus is facing seems to provide a fertile ground for growing xenophobic and racist attitudes and behaviours. Under these societal conditions the Government of Cyprus is more vigilant in achieving the best possible results.

- ii. Anti-Discrimination Body is responsible for combating discrimination on the grounds of race, community, language, colour, religion, political or other beliefs, racial or national origin and generally the promotion of equal treatment. This field is extended both in the public and the private sectors and covers social protection, social insurance, social benefits, healthcare, education, participation in unions and professional organizations, and access to goods and services, including housing. The field of its action also includes the securing-without any racial or other discrimination – of the enjoyment of all legally protected human rights and freedoms. Even though, the main institutional competence of the Body is to investigate individual complaints and provide independent assistance to the victims of discrimination. Further to this competence, there are other institutionally consolidated possibilities of action which are extended to a wide range of activities of preventive, mediatory, corrective and educational character in the fields of combating racism and xenophobia.

As a whole, the provisions of the institutional framework make up a unified protection system for the victims of discrimination which operates not only towards the direction of imposing sanctions to individual cases, but it also places emphasis on the intermediary action for the promotion of the principle of equality. It also provides a basis for undertaking preventive and educational initiatives against discrimination as well as for the activation of civil society at the level of public awareness and representation of victims of discrimination.

- viii. Towards providing assistance to the victims of discrimination, the institutional framework, the Anti-Discrimination Body works in, also introduces the possibility of taking positive measures aimed at preventing or compensating for disadvantages on the grounds of racial or ethnic origin. However, the Body does not have the authority either to represent victims and/or affected communities or to provide them with free legal aid. It tries, though, to include NGOs representing affected groups in several of its activities and actions.